

SENATE BILL NO. 204

INTRODUCED BY MOSS, STEINBEISSER

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT CREATING A MONTANA CENTENNIAL FARM AND RANCH PROGRAM; PROVIDING FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROGRAM; AND GRANTING RULEMAKING AUTHORITY FOR THE PROGRAM TO THE MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY."

WHEREAS, farmers and ranchers produce more than just food; they also contribute to the state's economy, maintain open spaces, and support family businesses; and

WHEREAS, Montana farm and ranch families have played a vital role in Montana's past and will continue to be important to our future; and

WHEREAS, many Montana farm and ranch families have withstood pressure from development, drought, and tough economic times in order to maintain their rural heritage.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

NEW SECTION. Section 1. Purpose. The purpose of [sections 1 through 3] is to recognize and celebrate the agricultural traditions of the state by identifying those places that represent the perseverance and stewardship of Montana families on their farms and ranches. The Montana centennial farm and ranch program accomplishes this purpose by acknowledging the strength and determination of these families and their efforts to preserve their agricultural traditions, THROUGH ISSUANCE OF A CERTIFICATE DESIGNATING A QUALIFIED PROPERTY AS A CENTENNIAL FARM OR RANCH.

NEW SECTION. Section 2. Montana centennial farm and ranch program. (1) There is a Montana centennial farm and ranch program to recognize Montana farm and ranch families that have owned or lived on their land for 100 years or more.

(2) A Montana farm or ranch family may apply for recognition A CENTENNIAL FARM OR RANCH DESIGNATION AND A CERTIFICATE through the program if the family:

- (a) has owned or lived on the farm or ranch for 100 years or more;
- (b) submits an application to the Montana historical society; and

(c) pays the fee set by the historical society TO COVER THE APPLICATION PROCESS AND THE CERTIFICATE.

NEW SECTION. Section 3. Administration of program -- fee -- rules. (1) The Montana centennial farm and ranch program is administered by the Montana historical society.

(2) The historical society may adopt rules for administering the program, including but not limited to rules:

(a) creating the application form and process;

(b) setting the application fee;

(c) creating guidelines for accepting or declining applications; and

(d) designing and awarding certificates to qualifying families.

(3) The fee provided for in this section must be deposited in an account in the state special revenue fund and may be used by the historical society only for maintaining the program.

NEW SECTION. Section 4. Codification instruction. [Sections 1 through 3] are intended to be codified as an integral part of Title 22, chapter 3, and the provisions of Title 22, chapter 3, apply to [sections 1 through 3].

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